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LETTER DATED 17 JULY 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CAMBODIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to enclose herewith the text of a letter dated 16 July 1997 from H.R.H. Samdech Korm Preah Norodom Ranariddh, First Prime Minister of the Royal Government of Cambodia, addressed to Your Excellency regarding the current situation in Cambodia.

In this regard, I would be deeply grateful to Your Excellency if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) SISOWATH Sirirath
Ambassador Extraordinary and
Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Letter dated 16 July 1997 from the First Prime Minister of Cambodia addressed to the President of the Security Council

May I first of all be permitted to express my sincere appreciation to you for taking your precious time to receive me last Thursday, 10 July, and to share with me the grave situation of Cambodia. Through your good offices, I would be deeply grateful if you could transmit my profound thanks and appreciation to the members of the Security Council for taking the initiative in approving a presidential statement dated 11 July 1997 (S/PRST/1997/37) on the situation of Cambodia.

Of course, I would like to have seen much stronger language included in the presidential statement. But I can understand the positions of certain members. What is important is that we focus on the international Paris Conference on Cambodia, whereby the co-signatories along with the two Co-Chairmen, France and Indonesia, should discuss a resumed special session of the Conference. I strongly welcome and support all efforts to promote peace and democracy and I remain open to dialogue with my partner Second Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen. I commend the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) for the initiatives it has undertaken to bring about a peaceful settlement for my country and for the question of the legitimacy of the Royal Government of Cambodia, of which I am the legally elected First Prime Minister.

The event that took place in my country on Saturday, 5 July 1997, was a violent coup d'état. No elected government official anywhere on earth should be brought down by the force of arms. My Government was born out of free and fair elections organized and supervised by the United Nations. I appeal to the Security Council to deny recognition to Mr. Hun Sen's new puppet First Prime Minister. The Council did very well on the question of the democratically elected President Aristide of Haiti and the same formula should be applied to Cambodia.

Mr. Hun Sen's bloody seizure of power is an affront to democracy and a flagrant violation of the 1991 Paris Peace Agreements. The awkward arrangement of two heads of Government which I was forced to accept with the loser in democratically held, United Nations-supervised elections has brought us all to the present situation. It finally gave Mr. Hun Sen time to consolidate his military power and to crush the democratic process and his political opponents.

May I remind you that this is not an internal affair of the Cambodian people. I do not wish to see history record that the death of democracy in Cambodia was the failure of the United Nations to act, and to act quickly.

(Signed) NORODOM Ranariddh
First Prime Minister